

REMARKS

The undersigned acknowledges a series of discussions regarding this case between Examiner Barr, Thomas Maloney, and David Roberts by telephone on September 15, 2003. Per a follow-up voice message from Examiner Barr, the applicant notes that no additional forms or statements are required to confirm intent for this application to serve as the U.S. National Stage entry of International Application No. PCT/US00/16324.

As noted in the Office action, applicant claims foreign priority based on European Application No. 99202376.2, filed July 16, 1999. In compliance with 35 U.S.C. 119(b) requirements, please find a certified copy of the European application enclosed.

With regard to the claims, in order to expedite the issuance of the allowed and currently amended claims, claims 40 and 43-48 are cancelled without prejudice to their patentability. Applicants expressly reserve the right to file these claims in a continuing application.

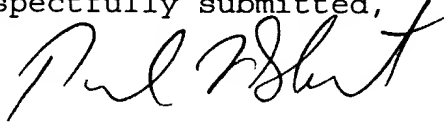
Claims 41 and 42 have been amended to be independent claims. The Examiner stated that these claims were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if amended so as to be in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim. The above amendments place these claims in allowable form.

Though claims 41 and 42 are amended to be independent, no additional claim fees are due because previously paid-for independent claims 19, 31, 40, and 49 have been cancelled. If this is incorrect, any required claim fees can be charged to deposit account 19-1345.

CEDE 2039.3
PATENT

In view of the foregoing, applicant respectfully requests issuance of a Notice of Allowance for claims 9-15, 17, 18, 26-28, 41, 42, and 57.

Respectfully submitted,



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*Enclosure

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